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SUBJECT: SIXTH COMMITTEE CONCLUDES DEBATE FOR THE 64TH
SESSION...AGAIN

REF: USUN NEW YORK 1114

¶1. Summary: On December 14, the Sixth Committee concluded debate on agenda items 169: Observer status for the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) in the General Assembly and 171: Observer status in the General Assembly for the Council of Presidents of the General Assembly. Saudi Arabia, on behalf of the cosponsors of resolution A/C.6/64/L.20 on granting Observer status to the Council of Presidents of the General Assembly, withdrew the resolution and noted that a letter would be sent from the Chairman of the Sixth Committee to President of the General Assembly Ali Treki recommending that the General Assembly identify appropriate ways of making use of the expertise of the Council. As regards resolution A/C.6/64/L.19 on granting Observer status to the PAM, it was adopted without a vote after several interventions by Iran. End Summary.

¶2. The Chairman began the debate by explaining that after informal consultations, the cosponsors of the Council of Presidents of the General Assembly resolution had agreed to withdraw their resolution, on the understanding that the Chairman would send a letter to the President of the General Assembly. Saudi Arabia took the floor to confirm this understanding. The Chairman read the letter which noted that "during the debate, several delegations(suggested that appropriate ways of making the unique expertise and institutional memory of the former Presidents of the General Assembly be identified, during the 64th session, in order to assist the Organization in meeting new challenges facing the international community." There was no objection to the Chair sending this letter to the President of the General Assembly. Consequently, the Sixth Committee finished consideration of the agenda item.

¶3. Debate then shifted to consideration of resolution A/C.6/64/L.19 on granting Observer status to the PAM. Iran took the floor, in the first of many interventions, to urge the deferral of the agenda item to the 65th session. It commented that the review of the Sixth Committee when granting Observer status should not be a "rubber stamp" and noted that its position had not changed since last week. It characterized the reopening of the Sixth Committee as an "unprecedented move." Malta, the chief cosponsor of the resolution, acknowledged that the Sixth Committee was reviewing the issue late in the session but argued that it had submitted the agenda item over two months ago, blaming the General Committee for the delay.

¶4. Several delegations (Libya, Egypt, France, Tunisia, and Colombia) expressed support for the resolution stating that Iran only had procedural objections to the resolution, not substantive ones. Iran quickly responded that it had intentionally omitted substantive arguments but that it believed that the PAM did not meet the criteria for observer status set forth in General Assembly decision 49/426, particularly its limitation to intergovernmental organizations. Iran stated that the PAM should not be compared to the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), noting that the IPU was granted Observer status "as an exception to the

criteria of resolution 49/426," and that it took several years for it to even obtain it.

15. The Chairman concluded debate on the topic and asked the Committee if there were any objections to adopting the resolution without a vote. Iran objected to the Committee's taking action on the resolution without further consideration of whether PAM met the criteria, but declined to call for a vote. The Committee adopted the resolution without a vote. Iran disassociated itself from the adoption of the resolution while Argentina explained its position noting that it did not regard the PAM as an intergovernmental organization.

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